

THE CLAIMS:

1. A method of validating entry to a competition via interaction of a sensing device with a printed competition entry form comprising coded data indicative of a unique product identifier, the method comprising the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

5 receiving, from the sensing device, interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data including at least the unique product identifier and enabling a competition entry to be electronically captured in the computer system; and

10 transmitting the product identifier and the competition entry to a competition administrator for validation of the competition entry at the competition administrator by verification of the product identifier.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the form is disposed on a product label including human-readable information relating to the competition.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the machine-readable coded data is substantially invisible to a human.

15 4. The method of claim 1, further including the steps, performed in response to a user using the sensing device to write competition-related information on the label, of:

receiving, in the computer system, a digital form of the competition-related information; and

transmitting the digital form of the competition-related information to the competition administrator as part of the competition entry.

20 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the interaction data identifies the label and a position of the sensing device relative to the label, thereby to enable the computer system to identify the label and determine how the sensing device has been used to interact with the label.

6. The method of claim 5, further including the step of receiving, in the computer system, movement data indicative of movement of the sensing device relative to the label, the movement data having been generated by the sensing device sensing at least some of the sensed coded data during the movement.

25 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the competition entry form further includes a signature field, the method further including the steps, performed in the computer system, of:

30 receiving digital ink indicative of a signature in response to the user having used the sensing device to write a signature in the signature field; and

verifying the digital ink with reference to one or more stored digitised signature representations.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of verifying the digital ink includes the step of comparing the digital ink with a digitised representation of a signature that is associated with the sensing device used to perform the signature.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of verifying the product identifier is performed by correlating the product identifier with a database of valid product identifiers.
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10. The method of claim 1, wherein the competition entry form includes one or more input fields to be interacted with by the sensing device, the sensing device generating at least some of the interaction data by sensing at least some of the coded data while the sensing device is used to interact with at least one of the input fields, the method further including the step of validating the interaction data related to the input field interaction.
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11. The method of claim 1, wherein the competition administrator counts a number of valid competition entries for a user and limits the number of entries to a predetermined number.
12. A method of enabling validation of a competition entry via a product label, the product label including human-readable information relating to a competition and machine-readable coded data relating to an identity of the label and including a product identifier, the method including the steps of:
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receiving, in a computer system, interaction data from the sensing device, the interaction data including the product identifier and movement data generated by the sensing device in response to the sensing device being used to draw or write on the product label, the interaction data having been generated by sensing at least some of the machine-readable coded data; and
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transmitting the interaction data to a competition administrator for validating the competition entry by verifying the product identification.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the human readable information includes at least one region with which the sensing device is to be used to interact, the method including the steps, performed in the computer system, of:
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determining, from the interaction data, when the sensing device has been used to interact with the at least one region; and

interpreting the interaction with the at least one region and performing an instruction in response to the interpretation.

- 30 14. The method of claim 13, wherein the interpretation includes determining that a request for further information has been indicated by the interaction of the sensing device with the region, the computer system being configured to cause the requested further information to be sent to the user or the sensing device upon the determination being made.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the interpretation includes determining that an action to be performed has been indicated by the interaction of the sensing device with the region, the computer system being configured to cause the action to be performed upon the determination being made.
16. The method of claim 13, wherein the interpretation includes determining that an answer to a competition question has been written in the region using the sensing device.
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17. The method of claim 13, wherein the interpretation includes determining that a signature has been signed in the region using the sensing device.
18. The method of claim 13, wherein the interpretation includes determining that a selection gesture has been made in the region using the sensing device.
- 10 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the region is a checkbox and the gesture is one or more strokes indicating selection of the checkbox.
20. A system for validating entry to a competition via interaction of a sensing device with a printed competition entry form comprising coded data indicative of a unique product identifier, the system including a computer system configured and programmed to:

15 receive, from the sensing device, interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data including at least the unique product identifier and enabling a competition entry to be electronically captured in the computer system; and

transmit the product identifier and the competition entry to a competition administrator for validation of the competition entry at the competition administrator by verification of the product identification.
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21. The system claim 20, wherein the form is disposed on a product label including human-readable information relating to the competition.
22. The system of claim 21, wherein the machine-readable coded data is substantially invisible to a human.
- 25 23. The system of claim 20, wherein the computer system is further configured and programmed, in response to a user using the sensing device to write competition-related information on the label, to:

receive a digital version of the competition-related information; and

transmit the digital version of the competition-related information to the competition administrator as part of the competition entry.
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24. The system of claim 20, wherein the interaction data includes a position of the sensing device relative to the label, and the computer system is programmed and configured to determine how the sensing device has been used to interact with the label.

25. The system of claim 24, the computer system being configured to receive movement data indicative of movement of the sensing device relative to the label, the movement data having been generated by the sensing device sensing at least some of the sensed coded data.

26. The system of claim 20, wherein the competition entry form further includes a signature field, the computer being configured and programmed to:

receive digital ink indicative of a signature in response to the user having used the sensing device to write a signature in the signature field; and

verify the digital ink with reference to one or more stored digitised signature representations.

27. The system of claim 26, the computer being configured and programmed to verify the digital ink by comparing it with a digitised representation of a signature that is associated with the sensing device used to perform the signature.

28. The system of claim 20, wherein the computer system is programmed and configured to correlate the product identifier with a database of valid product identifiers.

29. The system of claim 20, wherein the competition entry form includes one or more input fields to be interacted with by the sensing device, the sensing device generating at least some of the interaction data by sensing at least some of the coded data while the sensing device is used to interact with at least one of the input fields, the computer system being configured to validate interaction data related to the input field interaction.

30. The system of claim 20, wherein the competition administrator counts a number of valid competition entries for a user and limits the number of entries to a pre-determined number.

31. A system for enabling validation of a competition entry via a product label, the product label including human-readable information relating to a competition and machine-readable coded data identifying a product identifier via a product identifier, the system including a computer system configured and programmed to:

receive interaction data from the sensing device, the interaction data including the product identifier and movement data generated by the sensing device in response to the sensing device being used to draw or write on the product label, the interaction data having been generated by sensing at least some of the machine-readable coded data; and

transmit the interaction data to a competition administrator for validating the competition entry by verifying the product identification.

32. The system of claim 31, wherein the human readable information includes at least one region with which the sensing device is to be used to interact, the computer being configured and programmed to:

determine, from the interaction data, when the sensing device has been used to interact with the at least one region; and

interpret the interaction with the at least one region and perform an instruction in response to the interpretation.

10 33. The system of claim 32, wherein the interpretation includes determining that a request for further information has been indicated by the interaction of the sensing device with the region, the computer system being configured and programmed to cause the requested further information to be sent to the user or the sensing device upon the determination being made.

15 34. The system of claim 32, wherein the interpretation includes determining that an action to be performed has been indicated by the interaction of the sensing device with the region, the computer system being configured and programmed to cause the action to be performed upon the determination being made.

20 35. The system of claim 32, wherein the computer system is configured and programmed to perform the interpretation by determining that an answer to a competition question has been written in the region using the sensing device.

36. The system of claim 32, wherein the computer system is configured and programmed to perform the interpretation by determining that a signature has been signed in the region using the sensing device.

25 37. The system of claim 32, wherein the computer system is configured and programmed to perform the interpretation by determining that a selection gesture has been made in the region using the sensing device.

38. The system of claim 37, wherein the region is a checkbox and the gesture is one or more strokes indicating selection of the checkbox.

30 39. A product label including human-readable information and machine-readable coded data, the product label being configured for use with the method of claim 1 or 12, or with the system of claim 20 or 31.

40. The method of claim 1, wherein the unique product item identifier is an electronic product code.

41. The method of claim 1, wherein validation of the competition entry includes determining that a product associated with the unique product code has been purchased.

42. The method of claim 1, wherein validation of the competition entry includes determining that the entry form has not already been used.

5 43. A method according to claim 1, for enabling entry to a competition via machine-readable coded data on an entry form on a printed label of a product, the method including the steps of:

receiving, in a computer system, interaction data from a sensing device, the interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the coded data on the entry form, the interaction data allowing the competition entry to be electronically captured in the computer system; and

10 transmitting the competition entry to a competition administrator.

44. A method according to claim 1, using a product label for enabling entry to a competition, the product label comprising:

machine-readable coded data indicative of at least an identity of the label, said machine-readable coded data being readable by a sensing device as the sensing device is moved across the 15 product label, thereby to produce interaction data for enabling the competition entry;

human-readable information pertaining to the competition, the human-readable information being at least partially coincident with the machine-readable coded data, the human-readable information including at least one field element that has a corresponding zone defined in relation to it in a page description stored in a remote computer system.

20 45. A method according to claim 1, for enabling anonymous entry to a competition via a printed competition entry form that includes machine-readable coded data, the method including the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

receiving interaction data representing interaction of a sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data enabling the competition entry to be electronically captured in the computer 25 system;

assigning a competition alias ID to the competition entry; and

transmitting the competition entry to a competition administrator with the competition alias ID, thereby enabling the anonymous entry to the competition.

30 46. A method according to claim 1, for enabling anonymous entry to a competition, the competition being entered by interaction of a sensing device with a product label to generate interaction data indicative of at least an intention to enter the competition, the method including the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

identifying a first telecommunication address of the entrant from: an identity of the sensing device received or determined in the computer system; or the interaction data;

associating a temporary telecommunication address with the first telecommunication address;

5 sending the temporary telecommunication address and interaction data to a competition administrator;

receiving, from the competition administrator, information from the competition administrator addressed to said temporary telecommunication address; and

forwarding the information from the competition administrator to the first telecommunication address.

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47. A method according to claim 1, for: enabling an entrant to enter a competition; and limiting subsequent communication between a competition administrator and the entrant; via a sensing device interacting with machine-readable coded data on a printed competition entry form, the method comprising the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

15 (a) receiving interaction data representing the interaction of the sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data enabling the competition entry to be electronically captured in the computer system;

(b) transmitting the competition entry to the competition administrator; and

(c) enabling transmission of up to a predetermined number of electronic messages from the competition administrator to the entrant.

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48. A method according to claim 1, for limiting communication between an application and a user, via a sensing device interacting with machine-readable coded data printed on a surface, the method comprising the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

(a) receiving interaction data representing the interaction of the sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data enabling identification of the application;

25 (b) transmitting information based on at least some of the interaction data to the application; and

(c) enabling transmission of up to a predetermined number of electronic messages from the application to the user.

30 49. A method according to claim 1, for enabling an entrant to enter an instant win competition via a printed competition entry form that includes machine-readable coded data that can be sensed

by a sensing device configured to generate interaction data based on the sensed coded data, the method comprising the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

receiving the interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data enabling the competition entry to be captured in the computer system;

5 transmitting the competition entry to a competition administrator that is configured to determine whether the competition entry is an instant win entry.

50. A method according to claim 1, for enabling anonymous electronic redemption of a coupon printed as part of a product label, the product label including machine-readable coded data, the method including the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

10 receiving interaction data representing interaction of a sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data enabling electronic capture of: coupon data of the coupon; and a product identifier associated with the product label;

assigning a competition alias ID to the coupon data; and

15 transmitting the coupon data, the product identifier and the competition alias ID to a coupon administrator configured to redeem the coupon electronically.

51. A method according to claim 1, for enabling anonymous and electronic redemption a plurality of coupons, wherein each the plurality of coupons is disposed on a product label and includes coded data that can be used to determine a unique product identifier of the product label with which it is associated, the method including the steps of:

20 using a sensing device, and for each of the plurality of coupons:

(a) generating interaction data by sensing at least some of the coded data of the coupon, the interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the coded data; and

(b) forwarding the interaction data to a computer system, for enabling the coupon offer and the product identifier associated with the product label to be captured electronically in the computer system, thereby enabling the computer system to transmit the coupon offer and the product identifier to a coupon administrator; and

receiving coupon redemption information from the coupon administrator after a predetermined combination of coupon offers relating to a plurality of the product identifiers and or coupon offers has been transmitted to the coupon administrator.

30 52. A method according to claim 1, for enabling entry to a competition using a printed competition entry form including coded data readable by a sensing device as the sensing device is used to interact with the entry form, the method including the steps, performed in a computer system, of:

receiving, from the sensing device: interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data enabling the competition entry to be electronically captured in the computer system; and a sensing device ID of the sensing device;

5 allocating a temporary registration to the sensing device ID or to a user of the sensing device, the registration including a return electronic address associated with the sensing device ID or the user;

transmitting the competition entry to a competition administrator; and

verifying competition entry via the return electronic address.